

Conclusion

The AAF planners at the operational planning level did not like to mix domestic political considerations with military considerations. Their reasoning was that the conduct of warfare was a military matter and that the inclusion of political considerations was likely to delay or confuse the accomplishment of military victory.¹ In the area of postwar planning, however, the AAF planners were aware that military planning had to be in keeping with the foreign policy of the United States and that a military structure had to be designed which would give the government the necessary military instruments to carry out its foreign policies.

Since the planners could not accurately anticipate American postwar foreign policy and since they were reluctant to confer with State Department officials to gain insights into the possible policy problems of the postwar world, they decided to design a force which would be so large that it could handle every conceivable contingency.² The figure of 105 groups which General Handy had suggested as a force level for the immediate postwar period was eagerly grasped by the planners, since it was a figure that would make possible an enormous postwar air force and since it was received from a high-ranking Army officer. The 105-group plan, together with its deployment schedule, was considered by the planners a force of sufficient size to establish a *Pax Americana* throughout half the world (the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific). Combined with the British military force, an American postwar Air Force of 105 groups would be large enough to police the entire world.³

1. "Since our return, in addition to catching up with the normal, rapid flow of events, there has been an extremely heavy session between the British and American Chiefs, and between the President and the Prime Minister over future operations in the Mediterranean. That issue, has, however, been settled to the complete satisfaction of the U.S. Chiefs. It is a most reassuring example of solidarity and unity between the military and political interests on the American side in contrast with the British side, in which we believe the political interest took over and dominated the military." Letter from Kuter to Norstad (5 July 1944), p. 1. 145.81-80; 2930-39.

2. Correspondingly, there was a reluctance on the part of the State Department to make policy forecasts. Interviews with Tompkins and Davison.

3. The AAF postwar planners were not the only men in Washington who envisaged the postwar role of the United States military as the world's policeman. "I personally believe that a nation blessed as this nation is with everything that it takes in manpower and material resources to be powerful in a military way has it within its own control, if it wants to do it, to see to it there is no more war." Secretary of War Robert Patterson's testimony, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Military Affairs, *Hearings on H.R. 515*, 79th Congress, 1st sess., 1945, p. 58. "It is my personal opinion that the greatest single motivating force for world peace today is the organized military potential of the United States. . . ." General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower's testimony, *ibid.*, p. 61.

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National defense and defense of the Western Hemisphere were mentioned as two important goals which would require military forces, but there is no question that the sights of the postwar planners extended considerably beyond these limits. The desired force level of 105 groups, deployed to distant places and concentrating heavily on strategic bombardment, was a formidable structure which considerably exceeded any requirement for defense, even considering the fact that the Western Hemisphere and the American possessions in the Pacific did represent a large geographic area to be defended.

The postwar planners faced a technological, industrial, and administrative dilemma which they felt could be solved in only one way: through the maintenance of a large regular postwar Air Force. The experience of World War II offered certain lessons. The production of aircraft in quantity was impossible without the existence of a large, modern aircraft industry prior to the commencement of hostilities. Training of aircrews was an extremely long process that required extensive training facilities, competent flying instructors, a small instructor-to-student ratio, and a period of twenty months just to produce a novice combat pilot. In addition, the planners were plagued by the problem of maintaining proficiency in combat aircraft. Building air bases to include runways, hangars, housing facilities, gasoline storage and refueling facilities, communications, lighting, and ramp and parking facilities was a costly and lengthy job; with the increasing weight and size of aircraft, future problems would dwarf the considerable wartime problems in air base construction.

A small regular postwar Air Force could not train and give operational experience to the enormous numbers of reserve pilots who would be needed to meet the requirement of having a 1.5-million-man operational Air Force one year after mobilization. Such was the size of the force included in the various War Department strategic assumptions of the 1944 period.⁴

A small regular Air Force in combination with commercial aviation was unlikely to require sufficient airplanes to insure a large, advanced aircraft industry which could produce combat aircraft in quantity in time of national emergency. A small postwar Air Force would not need large numbers of modern air bases both within the United States and abroad to supply the air-base requirements in time of rapid mobilization and deployment. A small regular Air Force might not withstand the initial attack of an enemy, and the war might be lost with the destruction of United States airpower in the early stages of conflict. The postwar planners, trying to determine the force level needed to avoid vulnerability to attack, found the small, 16-group Air Force that remained within the budget ceilings established by General Marshall not only inadequate to meet the needs of national defense but a possible invitation for a quick, devastating blow from any potential enemy.

4. V-J plan, p. 6. Also 29 March 1945 chart.

Of all the considerations that appeared to the planners to justify a large Air Force in the first few years after World War II, the maintenance of a modern aircraft industrial plant was probably the most important single factor. The planners anticipated a period of years in the postwar world during which surplus military cargo and transport aircraft could fill most of the commercial aircraft requirements. The planners feared that this factor, combined with the small need for aircraft that a small postwar Air Force would have, would idle such a great portion of the aircraft industry that within a few years that industry would lose its ability to produce aircraft rapidly to meet a national emergency. A large regular Air Force, which was given the necessary funds to keep modernizing its force, would allow an aviation industry of moderate size to withstand the first years of low commercial aviation demand and to enter the decade of the 1950's with a technologically advanced production capability. Here is a rather different view of the "military-industrial" complex, for instead of industry insisting on a large air force, the AAF planners were insisting on a large aircraft industry to insure that the anticipated mobilization and developmental needs in military aviation could be met by the aircraft industry.

General Arnold believed—and the postwar planners were in complete agreement with him—that as long as the United States maintained its technological lead in aviation, in general, and in strategic bombardment, in particular, there would be little to fear from any potential aggressor. The technological focus which characterized the postwar planning process made the prospect of a moth-balled aircraft industry most unattractive. The planners recognized that only an aircraft industry that was actively working on developments in aviation technology could insure that the United States would maintain its technological lead over other states. To quote from the V-J plan:

Aircraft production after V-J day is planned on the basis of three primary considerations:

- (1) To provide aircraft necessary to equip and support the seventy-eight groups in the occupational forces and strategic reserve and to perform the required training functions of the AAF.
- (2) To provide the continuity of production essential to maintain an aircraft industry capable of rapid expansion in an emergency.
- (3) To introduce new and radically improved models as soon as they have been tested and proved in order to preserve AAF superiority in design and performance.⁵

The technological perspective of the planners, the doctrinal bias that colored the thinking of the AAF leaders in Washington during the planning period, and the importance of autonomy to these leaders explains the motivational considerations endemic to the postwar planning

process. The men involved did not consider the identification of postwar enemies, the efficacy of an international organization, and the foreign policy goals of the United States irrelevant; but they considered these factors of secondary importance. First priority throughout the entire planning period went to the creation of an independent air force, second to none in size, technological advancement, and strategic capability. If this goal could be accomplished, the planners were sure that no matter what political situation the United States might face it would have the necessary military forces to carry out its policies.

Postwar planning within the Air Force was initiated for parochial reasons, and during the two-year planning period, the goal of autonomy was never forgotten. Yet the planning went considerably beyond the parochial. The planners posited certain assumptions in order to justify a large postwar air force, and a superficial view of the record might result in the conclusion that this period was another prosaic example of unproductive interservice rivalry. The messianic quality of the AAF doctrine indicates that despite the parochial motivations which led to the creation of the PWD, the planners sincerely believed in the maintenance of earthly peace through American airpower. The roles of ground and sea power were deprecated not out of a fundamental distrust of Army and Navy leaders but because of the postwar planners' conviction that these two services were irrelevant.

The evidence is substantial that the AAF was much more thorough in its postwar planning than was the Army in that it created in the 1943-45 period a number of plans based on different sets of assumptions, while the Army planned largely on the basis of one set of assumptions. The AAF planners had a plan that included UMT, and one without it; a plan that assumed an effective international organization, and one that assumed no such organization; a study based on a year's warning before war, and one for little or no warning.

The Army assumptions were that UMT would be accepted by Congress and the American public, that Congress would not accept a large regular force, that the regular military forces would be filled by volunteers only, that the number of young men desiring to volunteer for regular military service would be small, and that the international organization would be effective. These assumptions made by General Marshall and the reluctance of the SPD to make alternative plans were based on two factors. Marshall had been so effective in the 1944-45 period in getting his ideas accepted by the President and Congress that the SPD saw no need to doubt that he would be successful in his quest for UMT. Marshall so dominated the Army Staff in Washington during the war that it did not occur to the SPD to be creative and provide him with alternative plans. General Tompkins and his staff, planning on the basis of Marshall's assumptions, attempted to arrive at the best possible force structure consistent with them.

The danger of having such an effective leader as Marshall within the military bureaucracy is that staff creativity slowly erodes in the presence

of long-range escort fighters to defend bomber formations. It is doubtful, however, that a fair test could have been accomplished, for with the extreme limitations on funds, the Army Air Corps would have hesitated to test the vulnerability of bombardment aviation at a time when it was extremely difficult to convince the War Department and Congress of the efficacy of bombardment aircraft that did not have a strategic capability due to range limitations (the B-17). If a test had been conducted without publicity, it is still doubtful that serious investigation into the technological possibilities of long-range escort would have been undertaken, because of fund limitations in research and development and because of the hesitation even to suggest that an escort airplane might be required.

When doctrine becomes dogma, all kinds of counter-dogma signals can be ignored. If the lessons of the Battle of Britain could be ignored, if the high losses in bombardment aircraft whenever they were seriously opposed by German fighters in the early, unescorted daylight raids in 1943 could be discounted, if it took the loss of 60 aircraft on a single mission over Schweinfurt in August 1943 and 60 more over Schweinfurt in October 1943 finally to convince all the Air Corps leaders that unescorted bombardment against defended targets was self-defeating as well as suicidal, then is there any reason to believe that attitudinal changes among the American public and in the War Department would have permitted a different Air Force to develop? The answer has to be a tentative no.

By giving a tentative negative answer to the first question, negative answers to questions two and three necessarily follow. What is presented here is not some vague theory of inevitability but rather an analysis based on motivational and theoretical constructs which were largely divorced from the realities of actual situations and technological and tactical developments.

Coordination between AAF Intelligence and the PWD was almost nonexistent. On rare occasions, the Post War Division would request from the Air Staff, Intelligence, an estimate of postwar problems or an evaluation of Soviet intentions in a particular area of the world. In addition, intelligence reports and letters addressed to other divisions within the Air Staff, Plans, would occasionally reach the PWD, but it received no regular flow of intelligence information. The Air Staff, Intelligence, was in the habit of dealing with the Operational Plans Division of the Air Staff, Plans, and no effort was made by either the Post War Division or the Air Staff, Intelligence, to provide the Post War Division with intelligence reports related to the postwar world.

On 28 July 1945 a letter sent from the Air Staff, Intelligence, to the Operational Plans Division of the Air Staff, Plans, concerning the rank of postwar United States military attachés was forwarded to the PWD.¹⁴ Included in this letter was a brief intelligence estimate of the major states with whom the United States would have relations and to which it

14. 145.96-128 (III-M-B); 8090-32.

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would send military attachés. The estimate concerning Russia is quoted in its entirety:

Land mass army and air force presently of equal predominance. With the advent of peace concerted efforts will be directed toward complete development of air power. Country poses greatest threat to security of United States.¹⁵

This brief intelligence summary apparently had no effect on the PWD, for there is no evidence of any modification in its position that the Soviet danger only existed in the distant future. The consideration of enemies was not terribly important to the postwar planners except as a means of reinforcing its case for a large postwar Air Force; this may explain the lack of concern about an intelligence estimate at variance with the assumptions of the Division. The evidence is substantial that the Air Staff, Intelligence, perceived the postwar Soviet danger to be of some immediate concern. There is no indication, however, that the officers of the Air Staff, Intelligence, made any attempt to articulate either verbally or in writing to the postwar planners their concern about the intentions and capabilities of the Soviet Union.

The military's apparent distrust of the civilian intellectual raises two questions: Why was there such distrust, and what was its impact on policy? The distrust in the 1943-45 period was largely a result of the criticism that the intellectuals had directed against the military in the twenties and thirties, which blamed the military for the initiation of World War I and censured it for America's entry into that war. The intellectuals' fear of militarism, a fear that is difficult to substantiate, engendered a corresponding distrust of intellectuals by the military. The military intellectual was tolerated by the military leadership and in some cases—if his loyalties to the military profession exceeded his loyalties to the intellectual community—admired. The result of this mutual distrust was the absence of civilian intellectuals from the AAF postwar planning process. *Brodie*

The more important of these two questions is what relevance this military distrust of the intellectual will have on future military planning. If the intellectual is extremely critical of the military profession and constantly accuses it of undermining democracy, while the military not only maintains democratic values but is also a defender of democratic institutions, then a mistrust of the civilian intellectual will continue and his voice in the military planning process will be either distrusted or absent. If, however, the civilian intellectual is objective when he criticizes the military profession, and recognizes strengths as well as weaknesses, the rapport between the intellectual and the military man may be fruitful for both. If the military leadership looks for the kind of intellectual advice that can broaden its perspective, then the military planning process may avoid some of the deficiencies evident in this case study.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Part of getting the right answers is asking the right questions. The AAF planners often got the right answers to the questions they asked, but, by failing to ask the appropriate questions, they missed some of the important lessons of the war that might have been most useful to them. How is it possible for a military service to produce the kind of planners who will ask the kinds of questions that could challenge its doctrine? One solution might be to import into the planning process scholars who are neither committed to the service doctrine nor likely to accept any doctrine uncritically. Another possibility would be to have a number of competitive doctrines represented in the planning process so that inconsistencies and irrelevancies might be noted and corrected. Neither solution was utilized in the 1943-45 period; consequently, Air Corps doctrine was never questioned or debated by the postwar planners.

The AAF planners did an enormous amount of postwar planning in the 1943-45 period, considerably more than either the Army or the Navy did and considerably more than I anticipated when I undertook this study. This planning was done for the wrong reasons. The motivations that initiated the process and the motivations of the planners themselves were not based on trying to analyze postwar international relations in order to design an Air Force that would meet the dangers to United States national security which might result from the international situation. Instead, the planning was done to gain autonomy for the postwar Air Force, a goal that was essentially achieved before the planning process had begun.

To recognize that the planners planned for the wrong reasons is interesting but not very helpful if one is to try to learn from the experience. Of much greater interest is the answer to the question: If the parochial motivation in postwar planning had not existed, would the AAF leaders have initiated a planning process which at the end of the war would have provided the kind of alternatives incorporated in the various Air Force plans? No positive answer can be made to such a question, but the examples of the Army and the Navy give some insights. The Navy postwar planning was also parochially motivated, and the Navy did accomplish some detailed planning prior to V-J Day. The Army, with very little parochial motivation, did very little contingency planning. It can therefore tentatively be said that wartime planning for postwar contingencies would have been minimal without interservice rivalry.

Bureaucratic lethargy has not been greatly evident in the United States military in the past thirty years, primarily because of the keen interservice and intraservice competition which began in earnest in World War II and has continued to the present. The costs of this competition are sometimes high; its benefits, though not always as obvious as the costs, can also be considerable.

The Air Corps leaders had become aware of the political side of military decisions during the long twenty-year quest for autonomy. Only by seriously considering grand strategy and the political and military ends of warfare could the Air Corps make the kinds of assumptions that

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could be used to prove their case for a separate Air Force. The organization of the AAF in World War II was based on immediate operational requirements, and the decisions that related to political considerations were normally made within the War Department (either in the Strategy and Policy Group of the Operations Division or by the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department).¹⁶

With the establishment of the Special Projects Office and the Post War Division in 1943, the Army Air Force was faced with a bureaucratic dilemma. Where were the long-range assumptions concerning American foreign policy goals, potential adversaries, and utility of a future international organization to be formulated? The State Department, the Strategy and Policy Group of the OPD, the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department, and the SPD, and the Army Air Corps and War Department intelligence staffs were logical sources for this kind of assumptive information. Although there is evidence that all of these sources made at least a small contribution to the development of the postwar plans, the PWD made assumptions and drew up plans based on these assumptions without having made a rational attempt to draw upon these external sources for guidance and without fully using the guidance they did receive. This can be explained by examining the mandate under which the PWD operated. General Kuter and Colonel Moffat understood the primary purpose of this Division: the composition of plans that would fully justify a large, autonomous postwar Air Force.

The content of these postwar plans highlights a number of fundamental errors made by the military planners, and these errors in turn point up some of the real difficulties that face planners in large bureaucracies. The planners neither incorporated the lessons of World War II into their plans nor even attempted to determine what these lessons might be. They failed to identify the Soviet Union as a short-term potential enemy. They selected 70 groups as the final bargaining figure for the Air Force on an arbitrary basis. In fact, what is most characteristic of all the plans is the arbitrary nature of the recommended force levels.

What was the result of all this planning? The final postwar plan, the 70-group plan, became AAF policy by the late fall of 1945. The planners had succeeded in converting their plan into Air Force policy because they were so closely in tune with AAF policy. This is the fundamental reason why the PWD was formed and left unburdened by tasks unrelated to postwar planning, and why it was successful in having the 70-group plan converted into AAF policy. The PWD served two policy goals: independence and a large postwar Air Force. It opened no new policy vistas, did no really creative planning, and it formed assumptions to justify force levels in a very limited sense.

Can planners in the military (or, for that matter, in any large organization) look at the future in an objective manner, be creative in the plans

16. Interviews with Giffin and Kuter. Interview with Colonel George Lincoln, U.S. Army, 9 May 1966.

they formulate, and successfully convert the plan into policy? This case study does not and cannot answer this question. It does show the difficulties of objective planning when the outputs of the planning process are determined by the policymakers before the planning begins.

Colonel Moffat and his staff entered into planning in what may be considered an inverse fashion. The end sought was not national security through a properly balanced military defensive and deterrent force but rather an autonomous, powerful United States Air Force which would be the first line of defense, the largest of the three military services, and the recipient of the largest share of the defense budget. Assumptions were drawn not as an initial step in the planning process, which would, in turn, provide the guidance for the structure, size, and deployment of the military forces. Instead, they were drawn in order to lead to the end desired. Thus, only the guidance of sources external to the Post War Division of the Air Staff, Plans, which contributed to that end was used by Colonel Moffat and his staff.

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demands of the occupation period. In misleading statements during the last year of the war, War Department and Veterans Administration officials indicated that occupation would be short and painless. The army, perhaps fearful of undermining combat morale, rejected proposals for a more frank explanation of the postvictory task. Not surprisingly, many Americans then were stunned when in August the army, now 8,000,000 strong, released plans to keep millions of men in uniform—over 2,500,000 men through July 1, 1946, a figure soon scaled down to 1,950,000. For a time the cabinet doubted that Congress would support a temporary extension of the draft, a measure needed to man the occupation forces.⁷

The gravest aspect of the August clamor for speedy demobilization was that it seemed to portend a lasting popular hostility toward the military. Impatience to get the boys home was understandable, but the swift reversal in press and congressional attitudes toward basic policies like universal training was alarming. Only months earlier UMT had seemed within grasp. By August, the press and radio reported, congressional backers of UMT were "privately admitting" that they had "lost their fight."⁸

Journalists pointed to army "brasshattedness" to explain the demise of UMT. The army's refusal to speed up demobilization and pare occupation forces indicated to some critics an "unnecessary ramrod-type stubbornness" in the Pentagon. To hold on to their forces the militarists were even whipping up fear of another war, one paper charged. "By necessity in war the military had been in the saddle. They do not want to get off their high horse and walk." The administration's request for an extension of the draft fueled such speculation and undercut the UMT campaign, since critics now suspected that the army, contrary to earlier promises, wanted both selective service and UMT.⁹

Opponents of UMT also scoffed at the military utility of citizens' training. The atomic bomb would "blow up peacetime conscription"

7. Sparrow, *History of Personnel Demobilization*, pp. 108-11, 141, 238; Millis, *Forrestal Diaries*, p. 90; Stimson Diary, 11 August 1945.

8. Robert St. John, NBC radio network broadcast, 6 August 1945, transcription in War Department Bureau of Public Relations, *Universal Military Training, Including Post-War Military Establishment* . . . , Series 30-55 (hereafter cited as War Department, UMT); see also *New York Times*, 7 August 1945.

9. Quotations from *Danbury New Times*, 14 August 1945; *Shreveport Times*, 9 August 1945; *Raleigh News and Observer*, undated editorial [August 1945], all in War Department, UMT. See also Ward, "Movement for Universal Military Training," pp. 113-14.

and "mean the end of big armies and militarism as bred from big armies," a Colorado senator was quoted as saying. Some columnists urged caution in assessing the effects of the bomb, but many were certain that nuclear weapons rendered land armies obsolete and made strategic air power all important. More broadly, science itself appeared to have replaced the mass conscript army as "the first front" in warfare and the best hope for winning wars "cheaply and easily." "The Postwar army," reported one Washington paper, "will be a compact, extremely mobile force with nightmarishly destructive weapons stemming, like the atom bomb, straight from the laboratories of science." Well-publicized predictions, such as one made by General H. H. Arnold on August 2, hurt the UMT case.

The next sneak attack may not come 2,000 miles from our shores. It may be centralized on Michigan Boulevard, Biscayne Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard or on Main Streets in your home town. We may not have a comfortable cushion of time to plan and build and train. It bodes fair to be sudden death out of a clear sky.

Air power and the atomic bomb did not alone undermine support for UMT. What they did do was deepen public faith in science as an alternative to the traditional sacrifices of war.¹⁰ *

Alarmed by popular reaction to the war's end and the advent of nuclear energy, the military grew increasingly pessimistic about the chances that Congress would approve its UMT plans.¹¹ The services' belief that the coming of peace and the atomic bomb jeopardized UMT was arguable in light of the strong opposition to UMT which already existed before the war's end. But the army and navy were convinced that a peacetime backlash against them had set in.

The services themselves were also still at odds on postwar policy. Throughout the war, long-range planning had been fragmented

10. Quotations from NBC radio network broadcast, 7 August 1945, in War Department, UMT; "Scientific Research Is Our First Defense," *Saturday Evening Post*, 25 August 1945, p. 108; *Washington Times-Herald*, 19 August 1945, and *Pittsburgh Sun Telegram*, 2 August 1945 (Arnold), both in War Department, UMT. For cautionary comment about the effect of the bomb, see "Are Armies Obsolete?" *New York Herald Tribune*, 11 August 1945; for the opposite view, see Sidney Shallet, "Pattern of Future War is Changed," *New York Times*, 12 August 1945, and Josephine Ripley, "Truman and Atomic Bomb Upset Peacetime Draft," *Christian Science Monitor*, 7 August 1945; all in War Department, UMT.

11. Carpenter to Deputy Director, SPD, 15 August 1945, file 353 (July-Sept 1945), SPD; Persons to Marshall, 1 August 1945, file 353 (157), Chief of Staff; H.A.G. [Colonel Harrison A. Gerhardt] to McCloy, 22 August 1945, file 353 UMT (June 1945-), ASW; Arnold, *Global Mission*, pp. 598-99.

* *Historian opposed that. looking policy - in best possible light. (Surrender, inevitable)*